

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

TOWN HALL RENOVATIONS PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

January 27, 2014

Town Hall – Lower Level Conference Room L101

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

- I. Call to Order – Chairperson Castle called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.
- II. Roll Call – Members present: Clarke Castle, Chairperson; Myra Cohen, Daniel Dinunzio, Scott Soares, Paul Vessella, and Bill DeBlasio. Others present: Members of the public; Mayor Stephen Woods; Ed Moriarty, Downes Construction Company; Dave King, Kaestle Boos Associates; Bob Korpak, Director of Facilities Management; Lou Jachimowicz, Board of Education Chief Finance and Operations Officer; and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.
- III. Public Participation – None.
- IV. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Mrs. Cohen requested that the minutes of the January 13, 2014 meeting be amended to reflect, on the first paragraph of the second page, that she had requested information comparing the lockers and showers at both the current Mortensen Community Center and the Mill Pond Bathhouse combined, with what is called for in the new design. The Chair asked that the spelling of Ms. Kenny's first name be corrected in Section VIII of the minutes. Mr. Baron was directed to make these amendments. Mrs. Cohen then made a motion that the minutes of the January 13, 2014 meeting be approved as amended. Second by Mr. Vessella. The motion passed unanimously.
- V. Prior Meeting Committee Member Requests – The lockers and showers comparison requested by Mrs. Cohen was not complete but will be provided. The other requests were included in Mr. King's Powerpoint presentation that primarily addressed the updates to the design concepts. Mr. Vessella's request for the prior Community Center estimate was answered in a prior e-mail: the presentation to the Committee on October 28 included an estimate of \$9,432,693. Mrs. Cohen had requested a seating comparison of large spaces where the Town Council has or would meet. Mr. King provided a table in his presentation showing a seating capacity of 277 in the old auditorium and 50 in the current Helen Nelson Room. It also showed a seating capacity of 84 in the proposed Council Chambers, 50 in the proposed Board of Education

meeting/training room, and 250 in the proposed atrium. Mr. Dinunzio had asked how many parking spaces would be lost if Garfield Street was not realigned. Mr. King's presentation addressed this and also the Chair's request to graphically show the difference between Garfield Street as it is currently and where it would be after the realignment. Currently there are 307 spaces in three lots at Town Hall. If Garfield Street were not realigned there would be 280 spaces. There would be no parking by the new front entrance and the number of spaces in the main (upper level) parking lot, between the Town Hall and the Library, would be reduced. The spaces in the main parking lot would be reduced to accommodate a change in grade in order to limit the number of steps to get into the Town Hall entrance by Human Services and to provide access for the Food Pantry drop off and loading area. If Garfield Street is realigned the plan calls for 445 spaces through the addition of 65 spaces by the new front entrance to the Town Hall and a 172 space lot by the Library. The Mayor noted that this lot would be on land owned by the Library, not the Town. Mayor Woods asked what the change in elevation was in the main parking lot. Mrs. Cohen asked how many feet of the park would be lost. It was also asked if the islands shown for the main lot could be eliminated. They are needed to accommodate the change in grade. The entrance by the proposed Human Services location and the current Library front entrance would be in line with one another, with walkways through the islands in the main lot.

- VI. Update on Design Concepts – This was included in Mr. King's presentation. He and Mr. Korpak had met with the Town Hall department heads to discuss the Town Hall design. They received some good feedback. The footprint for the building will remain the same, although four departments will now be relocated to different places within the building than had been presented to the Committee earlier. The Town Clerk had requested to be moved closer to the Assessor's Office, closer to where the voting machines are stored, and to have public access to that office off the atrium. The new location for this office is by the Assessor's Office, between the lobby, the atrium and the Transition Academy wing. The Building and Engineering offices were moved from the Lower Level to the Main Level. The Registrars of Voters Office and the Health Department (Central Connecticut Health District) are being relocated to the Lower Level.

The floor plan for the Transition Academy wing showed the new entrance. On the Upper Level floor plan, the new Helen Nelson/training room had been modified since the previous presentation. The connector to the storage area over the auditorium had been modified also.

Mr. King presented a new exterior perspective showing an entrance plaza, steps and a ramp. Mrs. Cohen asked what the length of the ramp was. It will be determined as plans are developed further. It needs to accommodate approximately five to seven feet of grade change. The open space shown in

front of the entrance is where the gym is currently located. The entrance will lead to a tall lobby space. Mr. Woods suggested that the number of steps be minimized if Garfield Street is realigned by others. A revised Building Section of the atrium was presented, showing the changes to the columns that will now support the Upper Level hallway. A revised image of what the atrium would look like on its' interior was provided. Lastly, a Cross Section of the area from the front lobby to the atrium was shown. Mrs. Cohen asked if there were places for flags and public notices. The Town Clerk had asked for a place to post public notices, which will be outside that office, in the atrium. There will also be open computer terminals in the atrium. The Chair noted that the new interior hallway for the Board of Education would be over the colonnaded area in the atrium. Mrs. Cohen asked about the amount of new space that was being provided to the Board of Education. The new space was in the proposed Helen Nelson Room and the recaptured interior hallway space. The Chair asked about the rationale for the three elevators to the Upper Level. One elevator is there now, the other connects all three floors from the hallway between the lobby and the atrium. It could just connect the Lower and Main Levels, but won't cost that much more to connect the Upper Level as the shaft will already be in place. The third elevator connects the Transition Academy wing to the Upper Level, which will serve as the main entrance to the Board of Education. It is not required by code.

Mr. Dinunzio felt that there may be an abundance of conference rooms on the Upper Level. Mr. King responded that this was what the Board of Education staff had requested. The Upper Level walls are not continually load bearing. There are masonry piers with concrete beams. Some walls are load bearing. The Mayor asked if the load bearing locations can be confirmed. That is expected to occur later in the week. The masonry piers also don't line up from one floor to the next. Mr. King will continue to provide additional information to Downes Construction to allow them to arrive at a more accurate budget number.

- VII. Preliminary Schematic Design Estimate – Mr. Moriarty presented a schematic design budget estimate for the Community Center. This had a total for trade costs of \$7,123,144 and a total construction cost of \$8,833,090. Downes Construction has checked unit pricing with various trades. The number for structural steel came from RJB , who is a metal building contractor. The contingency is at 8%. It is usually reduced to 5% by the time of construction. There were some recent adjustments to the budget. The drywall partition heights still need to be pinned down. This could save up to \$25,000. There is a 4% escalation factor with a start anticipated in late autumn. There has been a rise in inflation with a more recent leveling. FF&E (Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment) is in the soft costs and is not part of the construction budget. The full drywall partition height would be for sound control. A look at the Building Sections drawing showed a masonry wall on the lower twelve feet, with drywall the rest of the way on walls that are twenty to thirty feet high.

Drywall will be determined on a case by case basis. There will be a small savings from having ceramic tiles only on the wet walls and epoxy elsewhere in the lavatories. It was noted that when changes are made, usually something is given up. Soft costs (design fees, hazardous material abatement costs, FF&E, etc.) would be in addition to the construction budget. Mrs. Cohen requested construction costs for each building, the soft costs, and any other sources of revenue. The Chair stated that the Project Building Committee was seeking to bring the project in under the budgeted amounts in the Capital Improvement Plan and in time for a late spring referendum.

VIII. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee – The Committee will hold its next meeting on February 10th at 5:00 PM.

IX. Public Participation – Mady Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive: Does the Committee have an idea of the library's vision of programs for the next five years? It was stated that the two building entrances line up. The library may want to change their entrance. It might be prudent to check on their plans. She previously asked for a breakdown on the recreation programs that won't be going to the Community Center. What do the Seniors think about their programs moving? In the visual presentation showing the realignment of Garfield Street, handicapped spaces are not identified. There is no way for easy access. Thank you for including a lunch room. On the drawing showing the vestibule and the hallway to the atrium, where is the vestibule and where is the hallway? On the cooling tower, she doesn't understand the level of noise. [Reducing] Noise pollution is important to her. Cost over runs, how are they portioned out if the Community Center is built first? Wethersfield High School is \$10+ million over budget, do we know what we've got here, to address asbestos, etc.? We have had some problems at our schools, also, so is there any way to get a handle on that type of thing?

John Slusarski, 40 Grandview Drive – He hasn't been attending meetings prior to this, he is concerned. We have ceded the right for fiscal responsibility to the Town Council. You have doubled the size of Parks and Recreation. You are no where near the budget figure. He hears it is not going to cost more in taxes. It is not like you had to use the money each year that is in the slush fund called the Capital Budget. He thinks the Committee is crazy and hopes the voters say no at the referendum.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She was told previously that the Town Clerk's Office couldn't be moved because of the vault. Was the vault space compromised or did the Town Clerk's needs get met? The Health District has offices that are referred to as the Health Department. They show two rooms for Sanitation, which is at the Highway Department.

X. Response to Public Participation – Responses were provided on the topics of the Library's plans; that Senior and Disabled Center recreation programs will

not be relocated; handicapped parking; the location of the vestibule, lobby and atrium; the sound baffle for the chiller; and hazardous material abatement. Mr. Moriarty spoke about controlling cost overruns. The Town has hired a Construction Manager at Risk, Downes Construction. Downes will provide a Guaranteed Maximum Price with bids in hand from subcontractors. There will be a contingency for unknowns. This will also cover the costs for changes. The Construction Manager's time is spent largely on cost control and on managing the project schedule.

Mrs. Cohen noted that the Committee will have an estimate for the entire project even though there will be a time lag for Town Hall construction. The Community Center will be built first. There will be a Guaranteed Maximum Price for the Community Center first. There won't be a Guaranteed Maximum Price for the Town Hall until that work is put out to bid. The Committee could get a Guaranteed Maximum Price early, but it will have a cushion. Once you move forward with the bids for the Town Hall, you can't borrow money from the other part of the project. If the Town Hall bids come in higher, she would say: find a place to cut. She would not be in favor of increasing the project. Higher costs now mean postponing another project. The Capital Improvement Plan has a ceiling that limits what will be spent. If we were not doing the Town Hall, we would be building something else. So in that sense, it will not raise taxes. The Capital Improvement Plan is not a slush fund.

XI. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Baron

Jeff Baron
Director of Administrative Services